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## IN THE ABSTRACT

Please amend the ABSTRACT as follows:

--A method for forming an oxide layer ~~steam oxidation process~~ which provides uniform coverage of oxygen radicals across a surface of a substrate to enhance the oxidation rate and form a uniform layer of SiO<sub>2</sub>. The method for forming an oxide layer ~~steam oxidation process~~ provides the heat and oxygen radicals for SiO<sub>2</sub> formation through the combustion of a process flame. The process flame can be fueled by a combination of H<sub>2</sub> and O<sub>2</sub> process gases. The process flame can include a plurality of process flames directed substantially perpendicular to the target substrate to provide uniform heating of the substrate and a uniform deposition of oxygen radicals across the surface of the substrate to enhance the formation of an oxidation layer.--